

SAC RETREAT MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, January 18, 2007

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Navy Lodge, Ford Island

NON-GOVERNMENT

Terry O'Halloran
Business and Commerce

David Hoffman
Citizen-At-Large

Terry White
Commercial Shipping

Louis M. Herman, Ph.D.
Conservation

Jeanne Russell
Education

Robert Bruck
Fishing

Sara Peck
Hawai'i County

William A. Friedl
Honolulu County

Don Thornburg
Kaua'i County

Cheryl Sterling
Maui County

Kimokeo Kapahulehua
Native Hawaiian

Teri Leicher
Ocean Recreation

Marc Lammers, Ph.D.
Research

Michael Stanton
Tourism

James E. Coon
Whale Watching

GOVERNMENT

Athline M. Clark
DLNR - DAR

Elizabeth Corbin
DBEDT Ocean Resources

Vacant
DOH

Eric Kingma
WESPAC

Cindy Barger
US ACOE

Jerry B. Norris
OHA

Richard Poirier
DBEDT - OP

Glenn Soma
DOT - Harbors

CDR Bob Wilson
US Coast Guard

NON-VOTING

Bill Kiene
Fagatele Bay NMS

Rebecca Hommon
US Navy

Tom Friel
NMFS - Law Enforcement

Chris Yates
NMFS - PIRO

`Aulani Wilhelm
NWHI Reserve

I. Welcome Remarks – Admiral Tim Alexander

The SAC had the pleasure of meeting on historic Ford Island for the 2007 Retreat. Again, the intent was to work with Sanctuary partners and learn additional information about their efforts both for the Sanctuary and their mission in general. In 2007, the host partner was the US Navy. Admiral Tim Alexander welcomed the group and convened the meeting. Admiral Alexander provided the group with an update on the Navy efforts to restore Ford Island and their current mission in the Pacific. The Navy is very proud of their contributions to the restorations of the historic island. In addition he spoke of the Navy commitment to work with the Sanctuary and provide their support to the protection and enhancement of the whale population in Hawaii and the Pacific.

II. Sanctuary Program Update

Naomi provide the group with an update the of the 5 year Management Plan Review. The Plan is the primary focus of the sanctuary staff in 2007-08. The Review was last conducted in 2002. The effort should have started in 2004, but fiscal cuts have forced the program to retool the process to make it more affordable, but still accomplish the goals.

Phase I will be completed in September 2007. The 1997 agreement with the state calls for a 5 year review. The Governor can accept or reject the plan. The first part of the process is to summarize the activities of the Sanctuary and submit that report and letter to the Governor by September 2007. The report will focus on existing programs and emerging issues.

A second part of Phase I is the discussion of additional resources and an initial assessment of resources already identified for possible inclusion. The report will focus on living marine resources and maritime heritage resources. Phase II will occur in 2008. That process will require more public input and require additional staff and fiscal resources.

The SAC role will be to comment on the report at the next meeting and draft a letter to the Governor with a SAC recommendation.

The proposed timeline is:

January 2007: process overview and initial feedback from SAC

April 2007: Presentation on draft report and initial information on additional resources

June 2007: SAC recommendation on report to Governor

Naomi pointed out that other Sanctuaries will be looking at the Hawaii process as a potential model for conducting this process if it works successfully.

III. Budget Update

Naomi provided a brief powerpoint presentation on the current budget scenario. The current proposed budget continues to reduce funds. The staff is planning for both contingencies a worst case budget shortfall and an at best status quo budget. The national program does not prioritize among the different sanctuaries, each takes an equal reduction in the budget. SAC members expressed concern over the budget shortfall potential, and asked Naomi to keep them informed as the budget process continues.

IV. SAC Performance Measures 2006

Mary Grady reviewed the performance measures established by the SAC in 2006. The SAC had met or exceed two of the performance measures. The third measures relating to realigning the committees with the management plan would be continued as part of the management plan review effort.

The SAC also recommended that the SAC composition again be reviewed and that the Executive Committee should consider taking on that issue in 2007. Issues to be considered included:

- Utilizing the Charter Update process in October to review and amend if necessary the SAC composition
- Review the issue of government agencies voting on the Council: strengths and concerns with state agencies voting

The Committee structure changes made in 2006 have worked very well. Attendance for committee meetings has increased and there has been great discussion. Use of conference call format has been successful. The staff (Mary) has been doing a great job supporting the committee process. The issue based management plan will be (has been) helpful in beginning to align the committees. The focus of 2007 can be drill down the link with the management plan.

V. SAC Comments: Management Plan Review

The balance of the retreat agenda was to gather initial feedback from the SAC on the Management Plan content and “look”.

A. Report to Governor

The SAC had several comments in preparation of the letter to the Governor:

- The document should be “flashy” to get the attention of the Governor including pictures and brief highlights of the program
- The letter should include record of accomplishments and have the feel of a “sales” document in that it is colorful and easy to read
- The letter should emphasize that the Sanctuary has a statewide role, with a presence on all islands, outreach program, and educational efforts
- Flash and SPLASH: highlight the significant program features that are relevant to the state, with lots of pictures.
- The Thunderbay report is a good model
- The letter and report should outline the benefits to the state of the program of which there are many
- The letter/report should discuss not only whale recovery but the important of managing the habitat
- Stress the importance and uniqueness of co-managed sanctuary: model for others, opportunity for partnerships, minimal cost to the state
- Discuss economic benefit to state: whale watching tourism, engenders appreciation for species and habitat protection, while bringing economic benefit to state: should be able to get \$ figures for whale watching revenue in state?
- The letter/report should be short sound bits, with a positive tone, emphasizing how the sanctuary supports state initiatives
- Pictures: David Matilla showed some great photos
- Mention sanctuary role in international research
- Explain that there are still many things to learn, sanctuary needs to continue efforts to conduct research and share information with state and others
- Model to recover a species and then now how to maintain and manage over the long term
- Highlight emerging issues and future challenges
- Discuss the merits of moving from 5 year review to a longer review of permanent status – only two sanctuaries are not permanent and the other is moving to a permanent status
- Governor’s not aware of the history of the status and giving her that information via a briefing if not done already would be helpful
- Opportunity to make the sanctuary part of her legacy
- Importance of habitat protection
- Letter should include significant state/ sanctuary partners such as the Coast Guard-Governor may not be aware of all the functions

carried out by the various partners (SAC members strongly endorsed this idea)

- SPLASH should be focus: research and outreach local, national and international impact
- Include role of SAC in letter as significant part of the managing the resource and addressing issues on behalf of the various interest groups in the sanctuary waters: facilitate discussion and interaction on key issues such as whale vessel collisions, superferry, aquaculture, commercial/recreational boater education and outreach, whale /habitat research, etc.
- Include education and outreach focus within Hawaii to students and public: whale count, workshops, numbers of students impacted
- Include new facility on Maui and potential for serving the state
- Create a data set of time contributed by partners and activities to the sanctuary that benefit the state: Coast Guard time, SAC volunteer time, rescue efforts time, whale count volunteers time, etc.
- Mention that state does not have marine wildlife division, sanctuary plays a huge role in marine wildlife management in Hawaii

B. SAC Role in Management Plan Review

- The SAC could support the re-approval with a Resolution or letter attached to the Report to the Governor including a recommendation for permanent status of sanctuary
- The SAC could participate in the Phase II process for the analysis of additional species
- The SAC meetings in 2007-08 should be aligned to correspond with the plan review calendar to insure timely participation of the SAC
- The SAC should dedicate a good portion of time in 2007-08 to participate in the review effort
- The Executive Committee should take the lead in coordinating the SAC input into the process and report
- SAC should continue to pursue efforts to advocate for additional funds from NOAA for the sanctuary efforts
- SAC to consider a state concurrent resolution expressing concern about the federal budget cuts to the program and potential threats to the sanctuary

C. Timeline

- Executive Committee will take the lead in putting together the Draft Letter to Governor to be distributed to the SAC for discussion at the next meeting. The draft letter will include the following based on the discussion:
 - a recommendation to support permanency of the Sanctuary status
 - key highlights of the program from the SAC perspective including data on economic benefit to the state
 - general background information on the SAC and their role

- an emphasis on key partners such as the Coast Guard who support Sanctuary efforts
- SAC meeting to move to April to allow more time to draft and review report and begin discussion on Additional Resources
- SAC to meet in mid June to take action on letter and report to Governor

VI. Committee Reports

The SAC committee chairs gave a brief update of committee actions. The SAC meeting the previous day had substantive committee updates so the SAC retreat focused on any organizational or supportive efforts that could improve the committee work.

Suggestions included:

- Advanced email notice for committee agendas to all members
- More telephone conferences on broad issues such as the “pump don’t dump” campaign that might interest non-committee SAC members
- Advance notice of committee meeting time to all members if they would like to be included in that committee call

The SAC again complimented Mary on her efforts and stated that she is doing a great job working with the committees and the SAC.

VII. DLNR Report: State Partner

Jeff Walters, DLNR provided an update on the Ocean Etiquette Campaign in whale waters. He noted that it is an integrate effort with limited funds. They used \$11,000 in grant and \$2,000 for law enforcement. The campaign is designed to educate boaters and ocean users about:

- Vessel interaction
- Brochures, stickers, kayak stickers to be distributed
- Boater outreach and education efforts
- 7 workshops with vessel operator focus
- 40 minute presentation on avoidance
- Website and media outreach
- Print ads and radio announcements

SAC members complimented DLNR for linking well to the Vessel Whale Conference recommendations. Coast Guard auxillary is handing out the brochures which is a great example of parternships. A Pau Hana event with boaters is planned to got to where the boaters will be located to give them information.

SAC members added that this is really important to balance the message between whale collisions that are avoidable and those that are unavoidable, and what boaters should do for each.

VIII. Schedule for 2007

The group agreed to meet in April and June in order to meet the deadlines of the Management Plan review process.

IX. SAC Tour of Ford Island and Pearl Harbor

The Navy hosts provided the SAC with a boat tour around Ford Island, which included a view of the location of the new NOAA facility and a stop at the USS Arizona Memorial. The tour was more detailed and provided greater insight into the ongoing activities of the Navy and other federal agencies to preserve the area and maintain the memorials.